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when they read the bloody history of the recent riots, perpetrated by throngs of savages in the streets of the Quaker city, infinitely more inexcusable, ferocious, and murderous, than the Lynchers of the South and West? We remember hearing a gentleman from the Southwest say, with as much wit as sarcasm, that, coming from a law-and-order loving country like Mississippi, he was afraid to visit Philadelphia.

The reader will part from Dr. Durbin's volumes with a sincere respect for his abilities, his liberality, and his intelligence.

3. — *A Lecture on the late Improvements in Steam Navigation and the Arts of Naval Warfare, with a brief Notice of Ericsson's Caloric Engine*; delivered before the Boston Lyceum. By J. O. SARGENT. New York and London: Wiley & Putnam. 1844. 8vo. pp. 64.

THIS discourse is a very appropriate one for a lyceum lecture. It is well and vigorously written, abounding in interesting facts and lucid statements. The most interesting part to the general reader will be the biographical sketch of Ericsson, the inventor of the propeller and of the caloric engine. The name of this gentleman has recently become well known in the United States, on account of his connection with the unfortunate war-steamer Princeton. The circumstances of his early life, as related by Mr. Sargent, are curious and interesting. We copy a part of the biographical sketch.

"John Ericsson was born in 1803, in the province of Vermland, among the iron mountains of Sweden. His father was a mining proprietor, so that the youth had ample opportunities to watch the operation of the various engines and machinery connected with the mines. These had been erected by mechanicians of the highest scientific attainments, and presented a fine study to a mind of mechanical tendencies. Under such influences, his innate mechanical talent was early developed. At the age of ten years, he had constructed with his own hands, and after his own plans, a miniature saw-mill; and had made numerous drawings of complicated mechanical contrivances, with instruments of his own invention and manufacture.

"In 1814, he attracted the attention of the celebrated Count Platen, who had heard of his boyish efforts, and desired an interview with him. After carefully examining the various plans and drawings which the youth exhibited on this occasion, the Count handed them back to him, simply observing in an impressive manner, 'Continue as you have commenced, and you will one day produce something extraordinary.' Count Platen was the intimate personal friend of Berna-

dotte, the king of Sweden, and was regarded by him with a feeling little short of veneration. It was Count Platen who undertook and carried through, in opposition to the views of the Swedish nobility, and of nearly the whole nation, that gigantic work, the Grand Ship-Canal of Sweden, which connects the North Sea with the Baltic. He died viceroy of Norway, and left behind him, in the North of Europe, the reputation of one of the greatest men of the century. The few words of kind encouragement, which he spoke on the occasion to which I have referred, sunk deeply into the mind of the young mechanician, and confirmed him in the career on which he had entered.

"Immediately after this interview, young Ericsson was appointed a cadet in the corps of engineers, and, after six months' tuition, at the age of twelve years, was appointed *niveleur* at the Grand Ship-Canal, under Count Platen. In this capacity, in the year 1816, he was required to set out the work for more than six hundred men. The canal was constructed by soldiers. He was at that time not tall enough to look through the levelling instrument; and in using it, he was obliged to mount upon a stool, carried by his attendants for that purpose. As the discipline in the Swedish army required that the soldier should always uncover the head in speaking to his superior, gray-headed men came, cap in hand, to receive their instructions from this mere child. While thus employed in the summer months, he was constantly occupied during the winter with his pencil and pen; and there are many important works on the canal, constructed after drawings made by Ericsson at this early age. During his leisure hours, he measured up, and made working drawings of, every implement and piece of machinery connected with this great enterprise; so that, at the age of fifteen, he was in possession of accurate plans of the whole work, drawn by his own hand.

"His associations with military men on the canal had given him a tendency for military life, and at the age of seventeen he entered the Swedish army as an ensign, without the knowledge of his friend and patron, Count Platen. This step excited the indignation of the Count, who tried to prevail upon him to change his resolution; but finding all his arguments useless, he terminated an angry interview by bidding the young ensign to "go to the devil." The affectionate regard which he entertained for the Count, and gratitude for the interest taken by him in his education, caused the circumstances of this interview to make a deep impression upon Ericsson, but were not sufficient to shake his determination.

"Soon after the young ensign had entered upon his regimental duties, an affair occurred which threatened to obscure his hitherto bright prospects. His colonel, Baron Koskull, had been disgraced by the king, about the time that he had recommended Ericsson for promotion. This circumstance induced the king to reject the recommendation. The colonel was exceedingly annoyed by this rejection, and having in his possession a military map made by the expectant ensign, took it to his Royal Highness the Crown Prince Oscar, and besought him to intercede for the young man with the king. The prince received the map very kindly, expressing great admiration of its beautiful finish and execution, and presented himself in person with it to the king, who yielded to the joint persuasion of the prince and

the map, and promoted the young ensign to the lieutenantancy for which he had been recommended." — pp. 22 – 26.

The tone of this part of the lecture is too eulogistic to be perfectly in taste; and, perhaps, the confidence expressed in the results of Mr. Ericsson's calculations and combinations is too unqualified. The boast of Captain Stockton, "that, with twenty steam-frigates, on the new plan [the plan of the Princeton], he would engage to take possession of the British Channel, and to blockade London itself," takes away all value from his opinion, on which Mr. Sargent seems to set a high estimate. The terrible result of this officer's experiments with the Princeton's guns is an argument against his authority which cannot be easily answered.

4. — *Remarks on China and the China Trade.* By R. B. FORBES. Boston: Samuel N. Dickinson, Printer. 1844. 8vo. pp. 80.

THE affairs of the Celestial Empire have assumed a new interest in the eyes of the barbarian foreigners, since the termination of her war with England has opened a few more of her ports to their trade, and inclined them to speculate upon the possible amount of their goods which she may be induced to take, in exchange for her teas and silks. The moral aspect of the late war has also given rise to some curious questions, which have been discussed with great ardor, but with very little knowledge of the circumstances on which the decision of them must depend. We are very glad, therefore, that a sensible and well informed merchant, who has been long and most successfully engaged in trade with China, and who has resided for many years in Canton, in the most intimate relations with the Hong merchants there, has undertaken to publish a plain statement of many interesting facts, relative to our commercial intercourse with the empire, with which a few persons of his class are very familiar, though the public at large are sadly ignorant of them. He has executed his task with great simplicity and clearness, giving a succinct account of the origin of the trade, with some curious anecdotes pertaining to it, of its great increase, the mode in which it has been carried on, the restrictions under which it has labored, the circumstances attendant upon the late war with Great Britain, and the probable effect of recent events upon future commercial intercourse with China. The constitution and